

REF. DOC. #1645

STATEMENT OF THE FOREIGN OFFICE SPOKESMAN CONCERNING THE VISIT OF
THE ASAMA MARU BY THE BRITISH WARSHIP.

January 22, 1940

With regard to the visit made to the Japanese liner Asama Maru by a British man-of-war off the coast of Boso Peninsula yesterday afternoon (January 21), the Vice Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mr. Masayuki Tani, invited British Ambassador Sir Robert Craigie to the Foreign Office at 11:00 P.M. to-day and presented to him the following views and protest of the Japanese Government.

1. On the 21st of January, at 12:50 p.m., a British warship ordered the Japanese vessel Asama Maru, which was on her return voyage to Yokohama from Honolulu, to heave to at a point thirty-five nautical miles off Nojimasaki Point, Chiba Prefecture. The Japanese vessel, therefore, came to a stop at 12:54 p.m. at a point 34°34' North Latitude and 149°31' East Longitude. Thereupon the said British warship sent an officer and several seamen to the Asama Maru and, claiming that it was acting in accordance with international law and without explaining reasons for its action in detail and even without revealing its name, demanded delivery of twenty-one German passengers. The captain of the Asama Maru refused the demand, but he was unable to prevent the British warship from taking a forcible measure for removing the said German passengers.

2. It must be fully known to the British Government that the Japanese Government have adhered to the principle in accordance with the generally accepted usage that those nationals of one belligerent Power aboard a neutral

DEF. DOC. #1645

vessel whose delivery the other belligerent may demand on the high seas must be limited to those actually embodied in the armed forces. But nonetheless a British warship has taken the above-mentioned forcible measure against a Japanese vessel in the waters near Japan. The Japanese Government can not but regard such British action as a serious unfriendly act against Japan, and therefore they attach the greatest importance to the affair.

3. The Japanese Government can not acquiesce in the measure taken by the British Navy regarding which they demand the British Government to give them a full and valid explanation promptly. The Japanese Government hereby explicitly reserve in advance the right to demand delivery to them of the detained Germans.

4. In view of the fact that the British action has already given a great shock to public opinion in Japan, repetition of such an action in future would aggravate all the more the sentiment of the Japanese nation against Great Britain. From a broad viewpoint of the future relations between Japan and Great Britain the Japanese Government request the British Government to give their serious consideration to the matter.

DEF. DOC. #1645

C E R T I F I C A T E

Statement of Source and Authenticity

I, HAYASHI, Kaoru, Chief of the Archives Section, Japanese Foreign Office, hereby certify that the document hereto attached in English consisting of 2 pages and entitled "Statement of the Foreign Office Spokesman concerning the Visit of the Asama Maru by the British Warship, January 22, 1940." is an exact and true copy of an official document of the Japanese Foreign Office.

Certified at Tokyo,

on this 19th day of May 1947.

/S/ K. HAYASHI (seal)

Witness : /S/ K. Urabe (seal)

Ref Doc # 1645

淺間丸臨檢事件ニ付英大使へ抗議申入ニ關スル情報部發表

昭和十五年（一月二十二日）

昨二十一日午後房總半島沖ニ於テ行ハレタ英國軍艦ノ我淺間丸臨檢事件ニ付谷次官ハ二十二日午後十一時「クレイギー」在京英國大使ヲ外務省ニ招致シ左ノ通り本件ニ關スル帝國政府ノ見解及抗議ヲ申入レタ
一月二十一日午後零時五十分千葉縣野島崎沖三十五海里ノ地點ニ於テ一英國軍艦ハ「ホノルル」ヨリ横濱へ歸航ノ途次ニ在リシ帝國船舶淺間丸ニ對シ停船ヲ命シタルヲ以テ右帝國船舶ハ零時五十四分北緯三十四度三十四分。東經百四十度三十一分ノ地點ニ停止セル處右英國軍艦ハ士官及水兵數名ヲ淺間丸ニ派シ國際法上ノ權利ナリトシテ詳細ノ理由ヲ説明セス且ツ同軍艦ノ艦名スヲ明示スル所ナクシテ乗船獨逸人二十一名ノ引渡ヲ要求セリ淺間丸船長ノ右要求ヲ拒絶シタルモ英艦ノ強力ニ依ル前記獨逸人船客ノ拘留措置ヲ防止シ得サリシモノナリ。

Ref No # 1645

ニ從來帝國ハ一般ニ承認セラレタル所ニ從ヒ公海ニ於テ交戰國ノ一方
カ引渡ヲ要求シ得ル中立國船舶トノ交戰國ノ他方ノ國民ハ現ニ軍隊
ニ編入セラレ居ル者ニ限ラルヘシトノ原則ヲ執リ來タレルコト既ニ
英國側ニ於テモ充分承知ノ通ナリ。

右帝國ノ態度ヲ充分承知シ居ルニモ拘ラス帝國ノ近海ニ於テ英國軍
艦カ帝國船舶ニ對シ前項ノ如キ強力處置ヲ執リタルコトハ英國側ノ
帝國ニ對スル重大ナル非友誼的行爲ナリト看做ササルヲ得ス帝國政
府トシテハ本件ヲ極メテ重視スルモノナリ。

三帝國政府トシテハ今回英國海軍ノ執リタル處置ハ之ヲ容認シ得サル
所ニシテ右ニ議シ至急英國政府ノ充分ニシテ且根據アル説明ヲ要求
スルモノナリ。

帝國政府ハ右抑留セラレタル獨逸人ヲ帝國政府ニ引渡スヘキコトヲ
要求スルノ權利ヲ豫メ茲ニ明白ニ留保シ置クモノナリ。

leaf 262 #1645

四今次英國側處置カ既ニ帝國輿論ニ甚大ナル衝擊ヲ與ヘツツアル事實
ニ鑑ミ斯カル行爲カ今後モ繰返ヘサルルニ於テハ帝國國民ノ對英感
情ハ益々惡化スヘキコト必至ニシテ帝國政府ハ茲ニ日英國交ノ大局
ヨリ英國側ノ深甚ナル考慮ヲ要請スルモノナリ。

Ref Doc #1645

文書ノ出所並ニ成立ニ關スル證明書

(三號)

自分林 馨 ハ外務省文書課長ノ職ニ居ル者ナル處、茲ニ添付セラレタル日本語ニ依ツテ書カレ三頁ヨリ成ル淺間丸臨檢事件ニ付英大使ヘ抗議申入ニ關スル情報部發表(昭和十五年一月二十二日)ト題スル書類ハ日本政府(外務省)ノ保管ニ係ル公文書ノ正確ニシテ眞實ナル爲シナルコトヲ證明ス

昭和二十二年五月十九日 於東京

林

馨

右署名捺印ハ自分ノ面前ニ於テ爲サレタリ

同日 於 同 所

立會人 浦 部 勝 馬